FORESTRY

A new policy for Nova Scotia

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Forestry in its many facets is Nova Scotia's largest single industry. It is also our single biggest renewable resource, offering continuing potential of untold value, if we develop it properly and use it wisely.

Our forests are capable of serving us in many ways — to provide economic benefits to thousands of Nova Scotians, to satisfy our recreational needs, to provide a habitat for wildlife, and to combine with modern technologies in supplying energy and even food. Each of these is vital to the interests of almost every Nova Scotian, now and in the future.

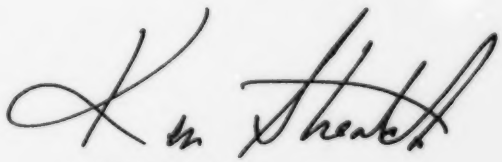
Unfortunately, harvesting practices of the past century or more on much of our forest lands and, more recently, loss of valuable woodlands due to the ravages of insects and disease, have caused great problems in our forests. Fortunately, the potential of these lands to produce quality wood products can yield three to four times more than we presently harvest from them.

The report of the Royal Commission on Forestry, appointed by this Government to assess the problems of our forests and seek solutions for the future, has been a milestone document. It has presented a frank appraisal of the problems and opportunities presented to us by this great resource. I believe it has brought the importance of forestry to the attention of all of us, as never before. It has provided a focal point for a new beginning, or at least a better beginning than has been possible before.

Unlike any previous administration in the history of Nova Scotia, this government is firmly committed: A RENEWED AND EXPANDED FORESTRY RESOURCE IS A MAJOR PRIORITY.

Now, with a clearly defined plan of action, we can work together to build the future, to improve our position in a modern world, to meet the challenge of change.

Working together we WILL meet that challenge.



Ken Streatch
Minister of Lands and Forests

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OUR FORESTS:
OPPORTUNITIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND BENEFITS

1

The forests of Nova Scotia are a most important renewable natural resource. They have the potential to provide a broad range of social and economic benefits to the people of this province.

The Government of Nova Scotia has a primary responsibility for the development and management of Provincial Crown forests, the protection of all forest land especially from fire, the delivery of forest management programs to forest landowners, forest research complementary to the federal effort and various related responsibilities which may impact directly or indirectly on forestry development. The private owners of forest land, whether industrial or non-industrial, corporate or individual, resident or non-resident have a responsibility for the development and management of forested lands owned by them.

The Government of Nova Scotia is convinced that cooperation, supported by education, extension services and incentive assistance programs, is a more effective approach to better forest management than punitive taxation, legislation or regulation. Canada and Nova Scotia have supported and encouraged private landowners to manage their lands more effectively in the past. Effective

cooperation must be enhanced.

A forest policy must capitalize on the capability of the forests to provide a greater volume of higher value products, expanded employment opportunities, an abundance of fish and wildlife and diverse opportunities for recreational enjoyment and other benefits. The Government of Nova Scotia will take the leadership role in ensuring that the challenges of the future are successfully met to provide the benefits we can justly expect from our forests.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2

Nova Scotians require that the forest resources of this province be developed to ensure a fair distribution of the economic and social benefits. This must be achieved through balanced development, building on the strengths and advantages that Nova Scotia now enjoys.

The New Policy will be directed towards:

- A healthier, more productive forest capable of yielding increased volumes of high quality products.
- Encouraging the development and management of private forest lands as the primary source of timber for industry in Nova Scotia.
- Supporting private landowners to make the most productive use of their forest lands.
- More effective management of all Crown lands.
- The maintenance or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitats, water quality, recreational opportunities and associated resources of the forest.
- Enhancing the viability of our forest-based manufacturing industries.
- A doubling of forest production by the year 2025.
- The creation of more jobs immediately and in the longer term through improved productivity.

POLICIES FOR THE NEW FOREST

3

Nova Scotia, in consultation and cooperation with Canada and the private sector, will take the lead in developing the forest resource. The following policies will guide the efforts of the Government of Nova Scotia in pursuing the goals and objectives enumerated above.

General Principles

The following principles will form the basis of the New Policy:

- the desirability of **scheduling** harvesting so that the most appropriate stands are harvested at the optimum time;
- the advantages of **allocating** such stands to the most beneficial end use;
- the need to create a suitable environment for the orderly, more effective **marketing** of forest products;
- a continuing vigorous **silviculture** program; and,

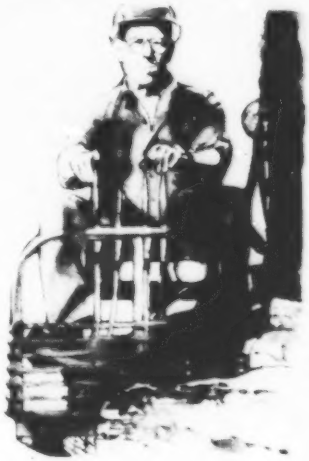
• the importance of **protecting** the forest from fire, insects, diseases and unwanted competing vegetation.

The Management of Private Lands

Three quarters of the forest resource in Nova Scotia is privately owned. These lands will be the primary source of supply for our forest industries.

The Government of Nova Scotia will work to ensure that a suitable environment exists for the management of these lands. Thus a primary thrust of the New Policy will be to encourage and assist private landowners to make the best use possible of their forested lands.

The New Policy will respond to the needs of private owners and the requirement that they:



• Have a fair share of the available market for primary forest products and receive a fair and reasonable return for primary forest products sold.

• Continue to enjoy the traditional rights and responsibilities of private ownership of land.

• Continue to receive incentive assistance in managing their lands for forestry purposes.

The Management of Crown Lands

The New Policy will be directed towards more effective use of Crown lands. This will require:

• The application of proven forest management techniques to enhance productivity and to provide for an increasing harvest of better quality forest products.

• That leasing and licensing arrangements are providing for effective management and are encouraging greater utilization of privately owned forests.

• The integration of wildlife and outdoor recreation considerations in the forest management planning process.

Forest Protection

Protection is the keystone of sound forest management. This means the Government of Nova Scotia will:

• Ensure that the capability to detect and suppress forest fires on all lands is enhanced.

• Continue the Bt. program against the spruce budworm.

• Continue its present policy that where circumstances warrant, the Executive Council may permit the use of products duly registered by the Government of Canada for forest management purposes.

• Continue the present policy of protection of selected forest stands against competing vegetation.

Forest Industry Development

The Government of Nova Scotia will support and encourage the further development of the forest products sector consistent with the capability of the forests to sustain a larger harvest. Special emphasis will be placed on enhancing the future viability of our existing forest industries and of sawmilling in particular.

The Government of Nova Scotia will:

• Develop and implement a **Forestry Trade Development Strategy** in keeping with the philosophy of the White Paper on Economic Development entitled **Building Competitiveness**, and the **Trade Development Act.**

• Encourage and assist in the development of new products and new markets and in the production of higher-value-added products.

Wildlife and Environmental Considerations

The New Policy will be consistent with the objective of maintaining or enhancing conditions for fish and wildlife.

The Government of Nova Scotia will integrate appropriate protective measures into forest management planning for Crown land and in guidelines for forest management programs on private lands, including:

- Protection of significant wildlife habitats and the maintenance of the long term productivity, diversity and stability of the forest ecosystems.
- Respecting the integrity of water supply watersheds, fish habitats and the aquatic environment, special places, ecological reserves and significant outdoor recreational opportunities.

STRATEGIES FOR THE NEW FOREST

4

The New Policy will require improved mechanisms for planning and managing our forest resources.

Forest Management Planning

The Department of Lands and Forests will adopt a new forest management planning process to guide decision-making.

This forest management planning process will involve the prediction of the effects of various forest management alternatives on wood supply. This will require:

- The consideration of a wide variety of factors, including desired rotation age, availability of land for forest management, eligibility and priority for harvesting, forest renewal and stand tending, size of silviculture program required, and other factors.
- Full consideration of wildlife conservation requirements, potential ecological impacts and outdoor recreation opportunities and needs.

• The preparation of operational forest management plans for Crown lands and the development and implementation of compatible forest management programs for private lands in cooperation with private landowners.

Forest Management Practices

All species will receive appropriate attention in the selection of stands for treatment and in deciding which forest management techniques to recommend or use.

Forest management techniques to be used on Crown land and recommended on private land will:

• Be designed to facilitate suitable natural regeneration wherever practical. This will involve **selection cutting**, or the harvesting of individual trees or groups of trees within a stand, and the **shelterwood harvest system**, involving one or more partial cuts carried out a decade or two before the final harvest.

• Permit consideration of the size and configuration of areas to be **clearcut** where circumstances warrant.

• Ensure that **planting** is undertaken where sites are not expected to regenerate adequately on their own.

• Make provision for early **spacing** or **cleaning** where naturally regenerated stands contain too many seedlings for good diameter growth.

• Provide for **weeding**, or the removal of unwanted competing vegetation, in stands to be managed.

• Provide for **commercial thinning** to enhance the future sawlog harvest where stand and site conditions permit.

• Reflect prevailing hazards with respect to forest insects, diseases and fire and related **protection requirements**. In this connection the Department of Lands and Forests will continue to monitor forest pest conditions, in cooperation with the Canadian Forestry Service, and provide appropriate information and advice to forest landowners/managers.

Private Land Forestry

Private lands and private landowners are the key to attaining the goals and objectives specified. Private lands are the most productive and most accessible in the province. Future success and the future viability of much of the forest industry depend on the interest of private landowners in managing their lands for forest production.

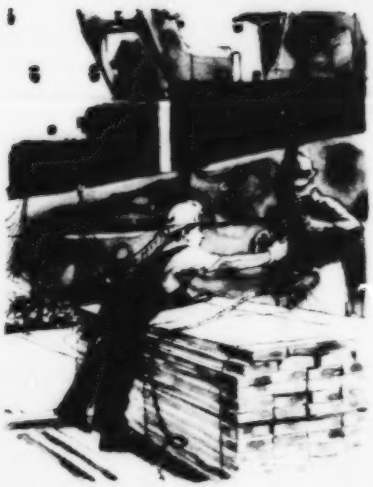
The Government of Nova Scotia will encourage and assist private landowners to manage their lands more effectively by providing professional and technical advice and assistance, training programs and suitable financial incentives.

The Government of Nova Scotia will:

• Establish a **Private Lands Directorate** in the Department of Lands and Forests staffed to assist private landowners in meeting their needs and to provide forestry extension services.

• Arrange for **suitable financial incentives** through federal/provincial agreements to encourage private landowners to undertake the necessary investments in reforestation and other long-term silviculture operations. While direct grants will continue to be a necessity in the near term, the Government of Nova Scotia will further explore forms of income tax incentives with the Government of Canada.

• Continue to support and assist **group management venture** organizations. Group ventures have proven that they can provide effective and efficient management services to woodlot owners. This concept will be expanded.



Marketing and Market Development

The success of the New Policy will depend on the availability of markets for primary forest products, and especially on the share of such markets enjoyed by the private producers. These markets will, in turn, reflect the relative health and viability of the pulp and paper mills, sawmills and other users of primary forest products and the wider markets on which they depend. Thus, **marketing is a critical part of this strategy.**

The Government of Nova Scotia will facilitate and support the continued development of our forest resources by:

- Amending the **Pulpwood Marketing Act** to better reflect the needs of small private producers with respect to (a) the registration of bargaining agents, (b) the organization and funding of bargaining agents, and (c) the resolution of bargaining disputes.

- Pursuing new cooperative marketing and market development opportunities in lumber, Christmas trees, surplus pulpwood quality fibre, harvesting residues and other low quality wood, as well as in the development of higher-value-added products. These requirements will be included in the **Forestry Trade Development Strategy.**

- Participating with the **Trade Development Authority** in marketing and trade development.

- Undertaking **productivity** and **feasibility** studies in response to requests from the private sector.

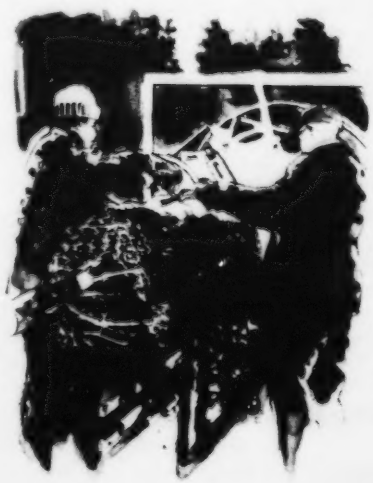
- Seeking **new uses** for the hardwood species in particular and stimulating the further development of **harvesting residues and waste wood for energy purposes.**

- Continuing to assist with the development of **maple sugar products** through the Department of Agriculture and Marketing.

- Publishing and distributing a **Manual of Scaling** for primary forest products as provided for in the **Scalers Act.**

Forest Research

The Department of Lands and Forests will undertake selective forest research in support of the New Policy. This research will be complementary to the research undertaken directly by the federal government through the Canadian Forestry Service.



To meet these needs the Department of Lands and Forests will:

- Further develop growth and yield predictive capability to better estimate future harvest potentials and to evaluate various strategies.
- Further develop and refine ecological methods of land classification, reforestation and silviculture prescriptions, and continue to evaluate strategies for the control of competing vegetation.
- Undertake trials to evaluate cultural practices for Christmas tree production, provenance trials to determine the best seed sources and site suitability, nursery trials to improve stock quality and minimize production costs.
- Undertake further research on the forestry/wildlife interface and the environmental impacts of various forestry operations.
- Urge the federal government to devote more resources to its research obligations in Nova Scotia.

Improved Technology

The Government of Nova Scotia will identify technological innovations that will assist in the more effective management of the forest resource and in the utilization of that resource. The Department of Lands and Forests will take the lead in acquiring the appropriate technology in support of the cooperative tree breeding program, forest nurseries, forest inventory and forest managment planning. To this end, the Department of Lands and Forests will:

- Employ a computer-based geographic information system to improve the forest inventory program, facilitate forest management planning and to assist in the prioriza-tion of stands for harvesting, protection and silviculture treatments; and, install computer facilities to provide for the effective storage and retrieval of various resource data throughout the field office network of the Department.

Worker Safety and Training

The Government of Nova Scotia will continue to take action to ensure that a skilled and productive work force is available to meet the demands of an expanded silviculture program. Training will also stress on-the-job safety to minimize the risks of accidents.

Specifically, the Government of Nova Scotia will:

- Provide appropriate training of silviculture woodsworkers, through the Department of Lands and Forests, in consultation and in cooperation with various departments and agencies of government and the private sector.

Education and Information

Successful implementation of the New Policy requires a well informed public. This requires that the Government of Nova Scotia:

- Expand the information and education efforts of the Department of Lands and Forests.
- Include more forestry content in the public school curricula.

Land Administration

The Government of Nova Scotia will provide an improved environment for the management of privately owned lands and will encourage all landowners and forest land managers to manage their forests more effectively. This will require that the Government of Nova Scotia:

- Review existing Crown land lease and license agreements to ensure that these are providing for equitable stumpage rates, adequate investments in forest management and improved market

access for privately produced wood.

• Accelerate efforts to investigate claims to certain ungranted lands to help clarify ownership and facilitate future management.

• Continue to provide incentive assistance for boundary line establishment and maintenance and forest access road construction as a component of forest management assistance programs under federal/provincial agreements.

Conserving Wildlife and the Environment

The Government of Nova Scotia will ensure that valuable wildlife habitats and the long-term diversity and stability of forest ecosystems, water supply watersheds, fish habitats and other significant resources are protected.

To achieve this:

• The Department of Lands and Forests will develop suitable guidelines and standards to minimize the impacts of various forest management practices on fish and wildlife habitats and the forest environment. These will be implemented on Crown lands and incorporated into forest management programs for private lands.

• The Government of Nova Scotia will proceed with the implementation of the Provincial Policies for the Conservation of Wildlife Habitats.

• The Department of Lands and Forests will undertake cooperative projects in wildlife habitat protection and management such as the current agreement with Ducks Unlimited and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

• The Department of Lands and Forests will provide for suitable greenbelts on lakes and streams in its forest management planning process for Crown land. Guidelines will be developed and integrated into ongoing forest management programs for private lands.

• In cooperation with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Lands and Forests will manage forest vegetation on Crown lands adjacent to public highways for the purpose of making these visually appealing and to demonstrate forest management practices to the travelling public. Private landowners will be encouraged to take a similar approach.

Funding Forest Management Programs

The Government of Nova Scotia accepts, in principle, the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Forestry that Canada, Nova Scotia and the private sector should share the costs of implementing the forest management policies and strategies.

The Government of Nova Scotia will:

• Immediately pursue negotiations with Canada for a new forestry agreement to provide for an appropriate level of cost-shared funding for the maximum term possible.

Accountability

In light of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Forestry relative to the necessity for independent verification of the effectiveness of forestry programs, the Government of Nova Scotia will:

• Appoint a **Forestry Advisory Council** to advise the Minister of Lands and Forests on the adequacy of forest management programs, forestry education, forest research, environmental protection and other matters relative to forest policy and strategy.

• Appoint a **Commissioner of Forestry Enhancement** to facilitate the implementation of forest management programs and to report annually to Government on these matters, and to coordinate the activities of the Council with those of government.

IMPLEMENTATION

5

Implementation of the New Policy will be reflected in a legislative package involving:

- The **Lands and Forests Act**, the **Pulpwood Marketing Act** to provide for a more effective basis for the marketing of primary forest products, and the **Forest Improvement Act.**